MODULE # 2: INTRODUCTION TO DISABILITY

Improving Access to Health Care for People with Disabilities

A self-directed training for aging and disability organizations
What is Disability

• World Health Organization (WHO) – 2001*

The World Health Organization calls disability an “umbrella term for impairments, activity limitations or participation restrictions,” conceiving “...a person's functioning and disability ... as a dynamic interaction between health conditions (diseases, disorders, injuries, traumas, etc.) and contextual factors," including environmental and personal attributes.

Disability: 1 in 7 Americans

The Institute of Medicine reported in 2007 that:

If one considers people who now have disabilities (at least 1 in 7 Americans), people who are likely to develop disabilities in the future, and people who are or who will be affected by the disabilities of family members and others close to them, then disability affects today or will affect tomorrow the lives of most Americans.
Complex Activity Limitations

• 14% of adult U.S. population has a disabling condition* resulting in a complex activity limitation that affects
  – Social and leisure activities
  – Self care
  – Maintaining a household
  – Working

Disability Among Racial and Ethnic Minorities

- Disability prevalence* is highest among African Americans at 20.5 percent
- 19.7 percent for non-Hispanic whites
- 13.1 percent for Hispanics/Latinos
- 12.4 percent of Asian Americans
- Disability prevalence among American Indians and Alaskan Natives is 16.3 percent
- Over 10.8 million non-institutionalized persons with disabilities aged 5 and over are estimated to be members of ethnic minorities.

Disability in the Future

• Growing in numbers as the population ages and with technological advances in care
• 88.5 million or 20% of the total population will be people 65 and older by 2050
• 42% of people over age 65 report disability*

Disability and Access

• People with physical, mental, cognitive, or intellectual limitations such as difficulty:
  – Walking, balancing, climbing
  – Seeing or hearing
  – Reading
  – Understanding or remembering

• Require physical and communication access and accommodations in health care settings and services
Access in Practical Terms

• A physical, mental, or cognitive limitation that affects a person’s ability to perform everyday activities, and

• The interaction of a person with such a limitation with their environment
  – Accessible public transit vs. no accessible transit
  – Physically accessible buildings vs. steps, narrow doors
  – Braille, digital information vs. only print
  – Sign Language interpreters vs. only spoken words
  – Accessible exam and diagnostic equipment vs. old-style, high exam tables; stand-only weight scales
Equipment Barriers

• Data from on-site reviews of over 2300 Medicaid Managed Care primary care provider facilities in 18 of California’s 58 Counties
  – 8.4% of provider sites had a height-adjustable exam table
  – 3.6% had an accessible weight scale*

Inaccessible Specialty Practices

• Annals of Internal Medicine – 2013*
• Recent review of 256 specialty practices:
  – 56 (22%) reported that they could not accommodate the patient
  – 9 (4%) reported that the building was inaccessible
  – 47 (18%) reported the inability to transfer a patient from a wheelchair to an examination table
  – Only 22 (9%) reported the use of height-adjustable tables or a lift for transfer
  – Gynecology is the subspecialty with the highest rate of inaccessible practices (44%)

Healthcare Disparities

• Lack of access, accommodations leads to healthcare disparities among people with disabilities who are more likely to:
  – Experience difficulties or delays in getting the health care they need
  – Not have had an annual dental visit
  – Not have had mammogram in the past 2 years
  – Not have had Pap test within the past 3 years
  – Not engage in fitness activities
Health Disparities

• Lack of access, accommodations contributes to health disparities among people with disabilities
  – Women with disabilities have higher death rates from breast cancer
  – Three out of five people with serious mental illness die 25 years earlier than other individuals, from preventable, co-occurring chronic disease
  – People with disabilities die from lung cancer at higher rates due to treatment disparities
  – Adults with disabilities are more likely to:
    • Have high blood pressure
    • Have high rates of obesity
  – People who are blind or have vision impairments are 1.5 times more likely to be obese than the general population
    • Have a 400 percent elevated risk of developing Type II diabetes
Question # 1: Disability means (choose the most appropriate answer)

A. A disease diagnosis
B. The inability to work
C. Trouble reading regular-size print
D. A physical or mental limitation taken together with level of accessibility in the community
E. Non-average physical ability
Question # 2: Prevalence of disability in the US is (choose the most appropriate answer)

A. Increasing
B. Decreasing
C. Not expected to change during the next few decades
D. Increasing for children
E. Increasing as the population ages
Question # 3: Health and healthcare disparities among people with disabilities (choose the most appropriate answer)

A. Occur at the same rate as among the general population
B. Are less prevalent than among the general population
C. Are highest for those who belong to racial and ethnic groups
D. Cannot be measured
E. Do not affect health status
Question # 1: Disability means (choose the most appropriate answer)

A. A disease diagnosis
B. The inability to work
C. Trouble reading regular-size print
D. A physical or mental limitation taken together with level of accessibility in the community
E. Non-average physical ability
Question # 2: Prevalence of disability in the US is (choose the most appropriate answer)

A. Increasing
B. Decreasing
C. Not expected to change during the next few decades
D. Increasing for children
E. Increasing as the population ages
Question # 3: Health and healthcare disparities among people with disabilities (choose the most appropriate answer)

A. Occur at the same rate as among the general population
B. Are less prevalent than among the general population
C. Are highest for those who belong to racial and ethnic groups
D. Cannot be measured
E. Do not affect health status